

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

While many of the negative health consequences of STDs manifest themselves in adults, these complications usually are the result of infections or behaviors acquired during adolescence. The rates of STDs are higher among adolescents. Adolescents are at higher risk because they frequently have unprotected sex, are biologically more susceptible to infection and face many obstacles to access treatment. According to a 1995 Tennessee High School Survey, more than 60 percent of high school students report having had sexual intercourse. Over 34 percent of students report having had sexual intercourse before the age of 15.

Rates of sexually transmitted disease in Haywood County rank among the highest in the State. In 1998, only Davidson and Shelby Counties reported higher rates of primary and secondary syphilis. Haywood County was second worst among Tennessee's ninety-five counties in terms of the rate of gonorrhea. Only Shelby County reported a higher rate. Haywood County ranks second in the State in terms of the rate of infection from chlamydia. Only Hardeman County reported a greater rate of infection from chlamydia.

